



May 16, 2022

The Honorable Joel Ferry
Chair, Business and Labor Interim Committee
350 North State, Suite 350
PO Box 145030
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

RE: Sunset Review of Hearing Instrument Specialist Licensing Act

Dear Representative Ferry:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to express support for the continuation of the Hearing Instrument Specialist Licensing Act.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 223,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Audiologists specialize in preventing and assessing hearing and balance disorders as well as providing audiologic treatment, including hearing aids. Over 1,700 ASHA members reside in Utah.¹

ASHA supports the provisions of the Hearing Instrument Specialist Licensing Act that exempt licensed audiologists to engage in acts and practices, which are included in the *definition of practice*, as a hearing instrument specialist or hearing instrument intern without requiring an additional license under this Act. ASHA also supports the provisions requiring a hearing instrument specialist to refer those under the age of 18 to receive a hearing assessment from a licensed physician or surgeon, osteopathic physician, physician assistant, or audiologist. ASHA further supports the requirement that dispensing a hearing aid may only be done with a prescription from a physician or surgeon, osteopathic physician, physician assistant, or audiologist.

Audiologists earn a clinical doctoral degree and are highly qualified to conduct comprehensive assessments that determine hearing loss, auditory function, balance, and related systems, and evaluate, select, and dispense hearing aids. Audiologists also assess the candidacy of individuals with hearing loss for cochlear implants and work with medical teams to provide fitting, mapping, and audiologic rehabilitation to optimize the use of these devices. These educational requirements, combined with Utah's licensing requirements, ensure that consumers in Utah continue to receive services from the highest qualified providers.

Thank you for considering ASHA's recommendations to continue the Hearing Instrument Specialist Licensing Act. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director, state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Rich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Rich, EdD, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL
2022 ASHA President

¹ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2022). *Utah* [Quick Facts]. <https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedfiles/advocacy/state-fliers/utah-state-flyer.pdf>.